

NCRN Inventory and Monitoring Program Online Newsletter

Number 005

September 2003

(1) PROTOCOL DEVELOPMENT FOR VITAL SIGNS MONITORING CONTRACTED OUT

(2) NPSPECIES BIRD DATA CERTIFIED FOR ALL PARKS

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(5) STAFF CHANGES – DATA MANAGER AND BIOLOGICAL INVENTORIES COORDINATOR MOVE ON

1. Protocol development for vital signs monitoring contracted out

After arriving at a list of 51 priority vital signs, the I&M team and the Science Advisory Committee (SAC) decided to identify monitoring protocols that could be used to address multiple vital signs. They agreed that protocol development was a necessary next step for determining monitoring priorities. After grouping the priority vital signs together by monitoring method, I&M staff sent out Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for protocol development. RFPs were sent out for vegetation, RT&E species, water, remote sensing, and invertebrate monitoring. Proposals were reviewed by teams consisting of I&M staff, NPS officials, and USGS and other scientists. Based on this review, contracts will be awarded to USDA Forest Service to develop a vegetation monitoring program, to Frostburg State University to develop remote sensing tools and water quality monitoring protocols, and to Virginia Polytechnic University to develop an RT&E species monitoring program. The RFP for invertebrates will be reviewed and sent out again in FY04. Additionally, protocols for white-tailed deer, bird, and amphibian monitoring are being developed in-house by I&M staff. Once monitoring protocols are developed and field tested, the I&M team and the SAC will look at implementation again to determine just how many vital signs can be monitored.

For more information about protocol development or the vital signs monitoring program, contact Marcus Koenen (202-342-1443 x216; Marcus.Koenen@nps.gov).

2. NPSpecies bird data certified for all parks

The NCRN I&M staff hosted a certification workshop August 25th-27th to certify the bird species lists currently in NPSpecies. Certifying the data consists of a specialist from each park going through the species list and indicating the status, abundance and nativity of all species they confirm to be present within the park. They also can indicate unconfirmed or false reports for species they don't believe to be actually present within the park. All NCRN bird data has now been certified, and we expect it to be made available to the general public via the NPSpecies webpage sometime next summer.

For more information about certification, contact John Sinclair (202-342-1443 x222; John.Sinclair@nps.gov).

3. 3rd annual I&M “Meeting of the Networks” a success

The NCRN hosted the 3rd annual I&M meeting in Lansdowne, VA this August. Participants were primarily NPS employees, but also included USGS scientists and other researchers associated with the I&M Program. One of the greatest benefits of the meeting was that it allowed participants to discuss and compare the different methods being used to develop long-term monitoring programs. This opportunity to learn from others’ successes and failures is a great benefit to the networks just beginning the process of developing their monitoring plans, as well as to the I&M Program as a whole. Also provided at the meeting was the latest information about the status of the nationwide inventory initiatives and new products coming out of the I&M Program.

In addition, an award for Outstanding Achievement by a Network Coordinator was presented to Marcus Koenen, the NCRN Network Coordinator. Congratulations Marcus!

For more information about the progress of the nationwide inventories or new products being developed by the I&M Program, contact Marcus Koenen (202-342-1443 x 216; Marcus.Koenen@nps.gov).

4. Reminder – I&M wants to come to your park

A reminder for anyone who may have forgotten or thought it was no longer available, a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the I&M Program is still available. A member of the I&M team would be happy to come to your park and meet with park staff to discuss the program’s goals and products, and to demonstrate how the program can help meet park objectives.

For more information or to request an I&M presentation for your park, contact Mikaila Milton (202-342-1443 x 225; Mikaila.Milton@nps.gov).

5. Staff Changes – Data Manager and Biological Inventories Coordinator move on

Although NCRN Data Manager, Christina Wright, recently moved on to a new Data Manager position with the Southeast Coast and Barrier Network out of Atlanta, GA, she will continue to work for NPS and the I&M Program. In addition, the NCRN Biological Inventories Coordinator, John Sinclair, has accepted a position as a Wildlife Biologist (Staff Officer) with Wildlife Services of APHIS. His last day will be September 18th. We are very sad to have lost such valuable employees and will be hard pressed to find equivalent replacements. We wish them well, however, and hope our paths cross again. Until the positions are filled, their duties have been distributed among the remaining I&M staff.

For more information, contact Marcus Koenen (202-342-1443 x 216; Marcus.Koenen@nps.gov).

This Newsletter is sent quarterly by the National Capital Region Network Inventory and Monitoring Program. The staff is based out of the NPS Center for Urban Ecology, 4598 MacArthur Blvd. NW, Washington DC 20007. If you would like to be added to or deleted from the mailing list, please contact Sybil Hood (Sybil.Hood@nps.gov; 202-342-1443 x 229).